

**Minutes of the meeting of the  
Mount Vernon City Library Board of Trustees  
August 4, 2016**

**Board members present:** Katy Armagost, Bill Craig, Margaret Redfern, Frank Repplier and Hal Verrell.

**Library staff present:** Director Brian Soneda and Deputy Director Sara Holahan.

**A. Call to order:** Mr. Craig called the meeting to order at 5:34 PM.

**B. Approval of minutes from the July 7, 2016 meeting:** Mr. Craig noted in the Visitors section of the draft minutes, that Mr. King had directed Skagit 911, not EMS. With that revision made, Mr. Verrell moved that the minutes of the July 7, 2016 meeting be approved as amended. Ms. Redfern seconded the motion; all were in favor.

**C. Visitors:** Mayor Jill Boudreau was in attendance. She asked Mr. Soneda to give a brief overview of his presentation to City Council's Public Safety Committee on August 3, which focused on safety and security concerns of both staff and public. He cited some statistical evidence that these concerns had escalated over the past 1-1/2 years. He also shared with trustees as he had with Public Safety Committee that some sound and in most cases effective responses had been made, and that other responses were in the works, including library parking lot and entrance area surveillance cameras, and a plan to lock public restrooms which would be opened only at specific patron request. Ms. Boudreau thanked the trustees for their letter expressing concern and support for staff, but did strongly state her opposition to one option suggested in the letter, that uniformed security guard would enhance staff and public safety; she believed that it was not a "good deterrent" and that more direct and cost-effective responses were available. One such response, locking the public restrooms, was strongly supported by trustees. Mayor Boudreau also gave an overview of the broader community response to safety and security issues, including the latest news on the embedded social worker program. After responding to questions and comments from trustees, Mayor Boudreau left the meeting.

**D. Surplus Material:** Ms. Redfern moved that items withdrawn between July 13, 2016 and July 27, 2016 be declared surplus and transferred to the Friends of the Mount Vernon Library. Ms. Armagost seconded the motion; all were in favor.

**E. Budget Reports:** Mr. Soneda noted that 2017 Budget preparation was a major agenda item and that his only comment about the 2016 Budget was that it was roughly on track, seven months through the year.

**F. Approval of Disbursements:** Ms. Armagost moved that disbursements from Period 7 in the amount of \$15,999.28 be certified as reviewed. Mr. Repplier seconded the motion; all were in favor.

**G. Monthly statistical reports:** Mr. Soneda described August statistics as disappointing overall. Discussion of Summer Reading Program (SRP) registrant numbers, which were also down, focused on whether the smaller number of participants could be impacting the relatively low gate count (library attendance) numbers for the traditionally busy month of July. Mr. Soneda responded that low SRP numbers could indeed be one factor in low overall attendance numbers. Ms. Armagost asked if the Pokemon Go craze could be utilized by the library to create foot traffic; Mr. Soneda responded that the library had experimented with Pokemon Go “lures” in the planning for the Centennial Social and could study this further. Mr. Verrell suggested “Bookemon” as a library take on the craze. Mr. Craig suggested greater use of billboards across the city for publicizing upcoming events, or that the library even consider purchasing/installing an electronic billboard. Mr. Soneda expressed the belief that library staff should consider any number of new or currently underutilized ways of “getting the word out” about the library and its services, and he thanked trustees for their suggestions.

#### **H. Director’s Reports:**

**a. 2016 Library Goals, progress report.** Mr. Soneda noted the success of the Centennial Social and the partnership with New Old Time Chautauqua and other partners was a great fit for the library’s 2016 goals.

**b. Outreach (100 year anniversary).** Mr. Soneda noted that he and staff continued to utilize the hook of the Centennial of tax-supported public library service in Mount Vernon to talk up the library and its services, as well as the desirability of a new library in the community. He noted an upcoming centennial program, a library garden rededication event tied in with the centennial of the National Park Service, to be held on August 25.

**c. Board of Trustee training opportunity (September 20).** Mr. Soneda reminded trustees about the Public Library Trustee Training workshop on September 20. The State Library had since the July trustee meeting confirmed a location, that being the Everett Hampton Inn. Two trustees, Ms. Redfern and Ms. Armagost, expressed their intention to register for and to attend the training.

**d. 2017 Library Budget priorities.** Mr. Soneda invited trustee input on budget priorities, clarifying for new trustees that prioritizing library service and material focuses and the bigger picture funding recommendations that would support those priorities was a very appropriate trustee role and in fact part of the Library Board’s role as defined by City Ordinance. He provided trustees with a one page draft of ballpark dollar amounts staff had discussed for each BARS line, up to that point. While there was some discussion of various lines, including the recommendation that more funding be requested for the Postage line, most of the discussion focused on the “where are we in the progression of moving from hard copy to digital content?” in the library budgeting process. Mr. Soneda acknowledged that this was a very appropriate topic of discussion. He noted staff was considering adding Beanstack software as an exciting way to manage the library’s Summer Reading Program and other programs or services such as book

clubs and readers advisory. He also pointed out the biggest single software add that would be in the budget request was the upgrade of the Horizon integrated library operating system. This process would start in 2017 and would be a critical simplifying and enhancing improvement for use of Horizon by both staff and the public. The Horizon upgrade would help in many areas, including a smooth and technologically logical gradual transition from hardcopy to digital content. Mr. Soneda also clarified that because of the timing of the City's budget planning process, there would be little opportunity to weigh in on the budget priorities at the September meeting. Trustees with further budget priorities input should contact Mr. Soneda before the end of August so that staff could consider that input before the required submissions of draft budget requests by September 2.

**e. Staffing update.** Ms. Holahan reported that Library Specialist Angie Limon was set to return from Family Leave on August 9, and that staff looked forward to her return. Mr. Soneda and Ms. Holahan both praised the work of Summer Daour, who took over many of Ms. Limon's duties during her absence.

**f. other.** Mr. Soneda reminded trustees that the next Library Update to City Council would be on August 10. Celebrating a Century of Service committee chair Summer Daour would do the bulk of that presentation to Council.

#### **I. Around the Table:**

**Mr. Verrell** passed.

**Ms. Redfern** passed.

**Mr. Repplier** shared his very positive impression of the Library Centennial Social on July 30, noting it was a perfect day weather-wise. He appreciated the many talents of the New Old Time Chautauqua performers, but he especially applauded the inclusion of the sun telescopes as a Centennial Social offering. Mr. Soneda noted not just the generosity of the Island County Astronomical Society members who brought and shared their telescopes, but the ongoing involvement of staff member Betsy Cherednik in working with the Astronomical Society to bring the highly successful telescope loan program to Mount Vernon City Library.

**Ms. Armagost** commented on a successful system using keypad entry to locked public restrooms at a grocery store in Seattle.

#### **J. Board Chair's Report:**

**a. Safety and security in library and surrounding areas.** Mr. Craig noted that this topic had been covered in detail while the mayor was present. He noted that trustee concerns as shared in the letter to the mayor had been taken seriously; he applauded the mayor's spending time with them in a respectful dialog about their concerns.

**K. Adjournment:** There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:30 PM. The next meeting of the board of trustees will be on Tuesday, September 6, 2016 at 5:30 PM at the library.

Minutes by Brian Soneda, Library Director